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THE RAGTIMER

1981:

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PUBLISHED BY
THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE
PRESERVATION OF
CLASSICAL RAGTIME

SOCIETY REPRINT SHEET MUSIC

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In Memoriam.

His many friends will be saddened to hear of the passing of Joe Lamb Jr. in Geneseo, New York, on November 14. His popular presence at many of the Ragtime Bashes in Toronto was a reminder of his father's genius and the debt that all ragtime musicians owe to Joe Lamb Sr. The Ragtime Society extends its sympathy to the entire family, but most particularly to Amelia Lamb and to Joe's wife, Sylvia.

RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

FOUNDED 1962
INCORPORATED 1970

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
INCORPORATED

is a non-profit corporation having the following objects;

To preserve classical ragtime music and to pursue such other activities as shall serve to maintain and develop interest in classical ragtime music and music related thereto.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1981

John Arpin - President
John Fairhead - Treasurer
Mark Wittmann - Secretary

Bill McCrostie
Marj. Wittmann

Editor - Jack Hutton

The 1981 Ragtime Bash is now history. But it's not too early to start planning for the next historic date -- the 1982 Bash which will mark our 20th anniversary. The dates are one week later than usual: OCTOBER 22-23-24, 1982. This is a date with history that you won't want to miss.

We are grateful for several suggestions on how to celebrate our anniversary and will share them with you in future issues. The idea of a directory of members is one that many of you feel is overdue, and we'd like your reaction to that.

As the year ends, here are other items of ragtime news:

. For those who send in their membership fee now, the rate will remain $8. But it will be going up to $10 soon at a date that we will announce through The Ragtimer.

. Society members in the Toronto area will be pleased to hear that plans call for mini-bashes in 1982. We will be in contact to let you know when.

. As you will read in this issue, Eubie Blake was awarded the highest honour that the U.S. can present to a civilian. We made contact immediately with the White House and are pleased to share with you an official photograph of the presentation.

Watch 1982 issues of the Ragtimer for special features on your anniversary. In the meantime, why not make signing up a new member your own personal project for the anniversary.

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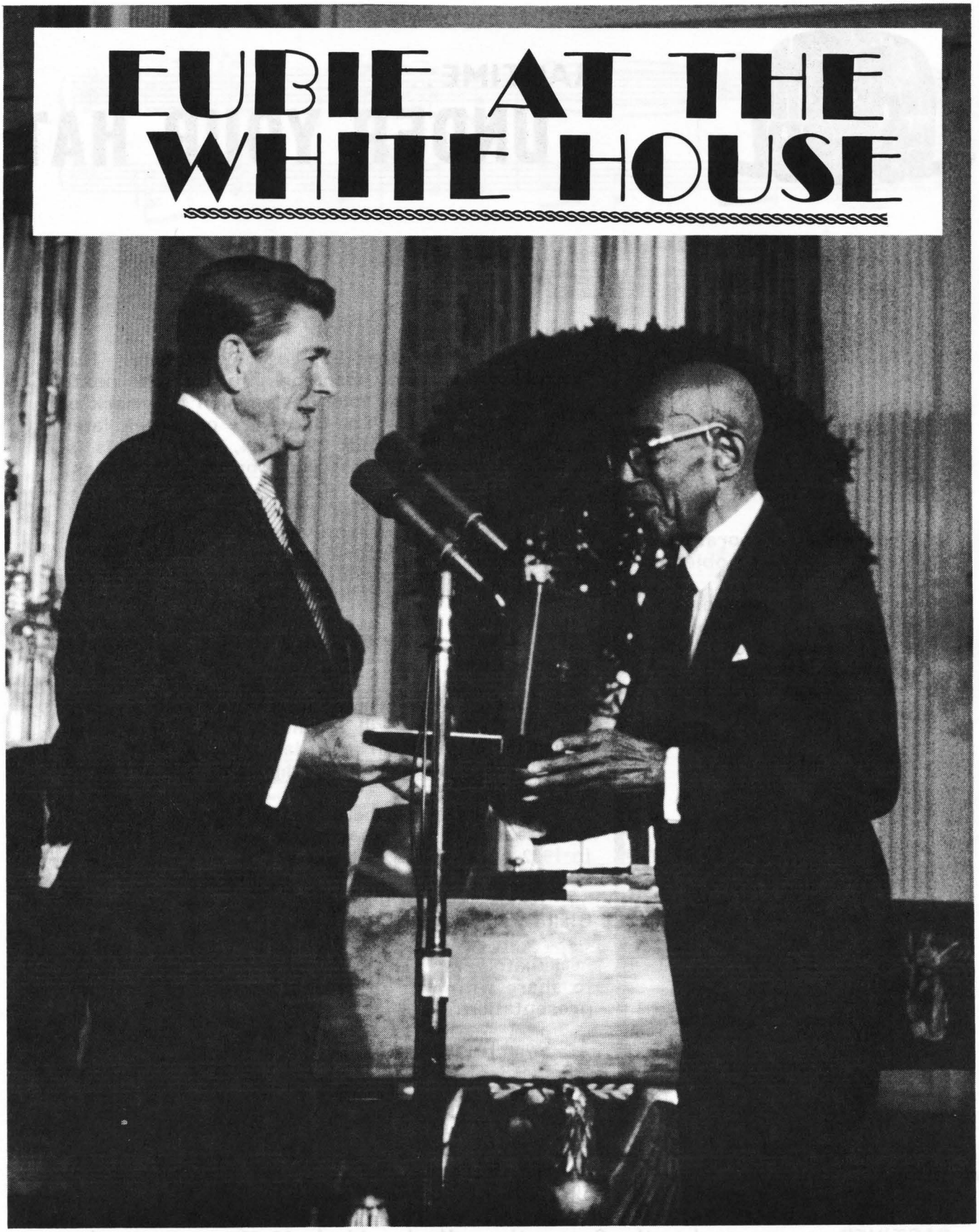
EUBIE AT THE WHITE HOUSE



WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH

"He is a national treasure"

The photograph on the opposite page captures a historic moment: the presentation of the United States' highest civilian honour -- the Presidential Medal of Freedom -- to 98-year-old Eubie Blake by U.S. President Ronald Reagan. Eubie was one of six to receive the medal Oct. 9 following a lunch in the East Room of the White House but, not surprisingly, he was the only one invited to play piano.

President Reagan introduced the first five to receive the award, then smiled at his audience. "Now, I'm going to switch microphones if you will bear with me for a moment."

"This last (award) is to James H. (Eubie) Blake, last of the great ragtime composers and pianists, the son of slaves and a pioneer crusader for black Americans in the world of arts and entertainment. Eubie Blake is a national treasure. As pianist, showman, and, above all, as composer, he has added immeasurably to America's musical heritage and helped to clear the way for succeeding generations of talented artists who, but for his example, might have been denied access to the artistic mainstream."

Then the U.S. president broke into a broad smile. "I understand that Eubie is going to respond in his own inimitable and unique way. He is 98-years-old, he told me."

"Ninety-eight and a half!" corrected Eubie

Eubie rose, buttoned his suit coat, walked slowly to the piano and played Memories of You. When he was through, the entire room rose spontaneously to applaud. Some wept

"All I ever wanted to do was play the piano," Eubie told the audience. "You know, my mother used to say that you ain't ever going to be nothing but a piano plunker. And you know, that's what I am -- a piano plunker."

Thanks to the White House, the Ragtimer was fortunate to receive not only the splendid photograph which we've reproduced as a keepsake but also a transcript of the Oct. 9 presentation. First, here is how President Reagan described the high honour that accompanies the award.

"The President's Medal of Freedom is the highest civilian honour that is given in the United States. What the Olympic Gold Medal is to athletes, what the Congressional Medal of Honour is to the military, the Presidential Medal of Freedom is to the private United States citizen. The names of those who have received this honour are stars in the American sky -- Helen Keller, Aaron Copeland, Walt Disney, Carl Sandberg, General Omar Bradley, Dr. Jonas Salk, Jessie Owens. The list goes on through the most illustrious and prominent of our citizens..."

(The medal was created in 1945 by U.S. President Harry Truman "for a meritorious act of service which has aided the United States in the prosecution of the war against an enemy ..." Later, President John F. Kennedy expanded the award to include special service in the areas of world peace and culture. Since then, the awards have been presented annually)

Every member of the Ragtime Society, we're sure, shares in the pride for this well-deserved honour for Eubie. And we thank the White House press information office for making it possible to share the occasion with our readers.

RECORD REVIEW

by
TEX
WYNDHAM

Pizza Express P5507 "With Thee I Swing", piano solos by Neville Dickie.

Selections: Drop Me Off In Harlem, Wildcat Blues*, Just Before Daybreak, Shout For Joy*, Hobson Street Blues, Harlem Strut, I'll Always Be In Love With You, With Thee I Swing*, Love For Sale, You Are My Sunshine, Poodlin' With Pat*, Rosetta, The Mule Walk.

Personnel: Neville Dickie, piano; Lee Breckman, drums, Brian Brocklehurst, string bass, added on selections marked *.

Available @ $9.00 (U.S. dollars) postpaid from ABW Productions, 31 Banstead Road, Carshalton, Surrey, England SM5 3NS.

Ferocious, punchy, propulsive, aggressive and other adjectives of that ilk come to one's mind in considering this hot, accurately-executed album of Harlem stride, which includes such flashy multi-strain cutting-contest winners as "The Mule Walk", "Harlem Strut", "Just Before Daybreak" (all three by James P. Johnson, the latter a relatively unfamiliar, invitingly graceful work), "Wildcat Blues" (By Fats Waller) and "Hobson's Street Blues" (the pick of the litter -- Dickie's dazzling, fierce, top-speed rendition of Bob Zurke's complex flagwaver has to be heard to be believed). Dickie keeps pouring it on with an all-over-the-keyboard boogie ("Shout For Joy") and very fast and busy improvisations on "Rosetta" and "Love For Sale", right hand flying across the treble above a machine-like powerful bass. Neville eases the throttle slightly, but only down to the legal limit, to unleash a barrage of Gotham licks -- suspended rhythm, rich walking left-hand chords, fleet high triplets, grace-note fills, etc. -- on most of the others, occasionally over-using favorite devices but invariably sweeping the listener along with an outgoing, big-sounding, highly rhythmic product. Mining a somewhat narrow though impressively hot and accomplished groove, Dickie makes it clear on P5507 that he is not only in the front rank of British ticklers, but also that would-be sharks better not mess with him.

Stomp Off S.O.S. 1007 "Smiles and Chuckles", by Waldo's Ragtime Orchestra.

Selections: Knock Out Drops, The Watermelon Trust, That Teasin' Rag, Eli Green's Cakewalk*, That Mysterious Rag, Alexander's Ragtime Band, The Burning of Rome, Smiles and Chuckles, Little Jack's Rag*, Sally Trombone, Yankee Bird March, Alkali Ike, Dill Pickles Rag, Stop It.

* piano solo

Personnel: Ray Eubanks, 1st trumpet; Robert Birkhimer, 2nd trumpet; Vaughn Wiester, trombone John Smarelli, 1st violin; Ingred Habekost, 2nd violin; Jim Shull, viola; Elenor Foster, cello; Byron Rooker, clarinet, Diane McCloskey, flute/piccolo; Terry Waldo, piano; Sidney Townsend, tuba; Robert Breithaupt, drums/percussion.

Available @ $7.98 (plus $2 overseas) from Stomp Off Records, 549 Fairview Terrace, York, Pennsylvania 17403.

If this assortment of briskly-paced marches, rag songs and rags delivered in excellent fidelity by pianist Terry Waldo's Ragtime Orchestra leans heavily in the direction of a bouncing, somewhat-stiff-and-strident military band approach, this monochromatic aspect of S.O.S. 1007 may be attributable, at least partially, to two causes: (1) the vintage stock orchestrations being performed pre-date the jazz age and thus naturally lack the flexibility and excitement of band figures that have become commonplace since the 1920's and to which our ears have been conditioned, and (2) these stocks were probably designed for dancing, which was a pretty fast and active affair during the heyday of the Fox Trot and other 'animal' dances. There is a modest attempt to provide contrast on some of the trios, when certain of the louder instruments drop out so that others doubling the melody come to the fore (e.g., "That Teasin' Rag", where we hear the strings and bells, or "Yankee Bird March" - clarinet, strings, piccolo), but more success is achieved in this direction in the several tracks where Waldo (the session's only soloist) separates full-band passages via strains of unaccompanied, easy-rolling, gritty ragtime tickling ("The Watermelon Trust" and "Dill Pickles Rag" are exceptionally good for this reason, Terry's sensitive playing complementing the Orchestra's technically impeccable but noticeably mechanical execution). Stock arrangements from the ragtime years are a part of the scene that deserve attention, but their need to accommodate varying instrumental combinations and levels of playing skill tells you that the publishers' staff arrangers had little opportunity to insert a great deal of depth or imagination into the charts. That factor, plus the inclusion of non-rags in the bill ("The Burning of Rome" is a rather dated and corny descriptive march, "Sally Trombone" is a crisp, spirited exercise in stop-time and lubricious trombone glissandi, etc.) tends to put S.O.S. 1007 on the for-historically-oriented-ragophiles side.

Musical Heritage Society MHS 4368 "An American Classic: Eubie Blake", by the Amherst Saxaphone Quartet.

Selections: Charleston Rag, Kitchen Tom, Poor Katie Redd, Jessamine Lane, Tricky Fingers, Randi's Rag, Fizz Water, Dictys On Seventh Avenue, Butterfly, Eubie Dubie, Chevy Chase, Valse Marion, Troublesome Ivories, I'm Just Wild About Harry.

Personnel: Salvatore Andolina, soprano saxaphone; Michael Nascimben, alto saxaphone; Stephen Rosenthal, tenor saxaphone; Harry Fackelman, baritone saxaphone.

Available from Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Road, Tinton Falls, New Jersey 07724. The disco also appears as Music Masters MM 20013, from the same address, in a jacket which has a colour version of the black-and-white Blake photo on the MHS jacket, omits the photo of the Quartet on the MHS jacket, and contains a slightly abridged version of the MHS liner notes.

In flawless acoustics and round, sonorous, legitimate, singing tones, The Amherst Saxophone Quartet captures much of the essence of Eubie Blake's magic in these fourteen titles, mostly rags, intelligently and sensitively scored for four voices rather than 10 fingers while retaining the basic motifs and counterlines of the published scores. The results are mellow, pretty, and well-suited to the romantic, old-world flavour of "Valse Marion", the lush, yearning quality of "Jessamine Lane" with its loping up-and-down chords under its long melodic notes, the fluttery impressions of the evanescent "Butterfly" and the more linear, less noveltyish rags like "Kitchen Tom" and "Dictys On Seventh Avenue". Frequently, the soprano takes the lead joined by alto or tenor to sketch in thicker right-hand passages, while the baritone and anyone else available generate

an oom-pah rhythm, bouncing along in a slightly precious, music-boxy or calliope-like way that lacks the bite and punch to sock home the virtuoso solo piano showcases like "Tricky Fingers" or "Troublesome Ivories", but compensates somewhat by putting the characteristic Eubieisms into focus as compositional devices rather than pianistic "tricks". "Poor Katie Redd" and "Eubie Dubie" are especially effective in moving the lead among the four horns, and the whole session has a merry-go-round amiability plus a polished professionalism that should recommend it not only to Blakeophiles (all Ragtimer readers fall in that category) but also to students of the more out-of-the-way ragtime byways.

The Ragtime Mailbag

S.D.(Steve) Bentley, a Ragtime Society member living in North Vancouver, not only plays ragtime piano as a hobby but makes his own music rolls -- mainly rags. We're grateful for this report he sent after listening to Turk Murphy's Jazz Band in San Francisco.

"Picture yourself at Earthquake McGoon's, the home of Turk Murphy's Jazz Band. Having owned a recording of the band for about 18 years, I was eager to see and hear the band 'live'. As soon as you walk in, you have the impression that the year might be 1912, 1920 or 1930, particularly because of the long bar. At the far end is a small dance floor, stage and numerous tables. Four hundred would be a good crowd. Turk is accompanied tonight by piano, tuba, banjo, trumpet, clarinet and soprano sax. You're immediately into the beat with blues, traditional jazz and ragtime -- "Wolverine Blues... Grandpa's Spells...I Can't Give You Anything But Love...Cake Walking Babies From Home". Now Turk casts aside his trombone to accompany the piano ("Harlem Rag") on washboard. Super! Now it's the banjo's turn to play "Temptation Rag" with faultless precision. When the band takes a break, patrons can be entertained by another piano player or banjo player (the latter on Friday nights). Wally Rose is the "break pianist" on Wednesday nights. Pat Yankee sings with the band on Friday and Saturday nights. The only annoying thing? Closing time comes too soon at 1:30 a.m. and you have to wend your weary way home!"

Another Ragtime Society member from the West, Bob Pfeiff of Banff, has some interesting thoughts about how we might celebrate the 20th anniversary.

"As a relatively new member (how I wish I had known about the society 20 years ago) I feel rather poorly informed in relation to what I take to be the knowledge of others. I could really use a directory of members (I don't even know how many there are!) so that it might be possible to find some nearby to meet and share with. If a separate directory is not possible, it might be worth considering publishing one in sections (like the reprint catalogue) in a small type size. Future membership renewal forms could ask for information regarding special interests and willingness to meet others.

"As for other anniversary projects, my vote would be for publication of more reprints of unavilable rags. My personal collection goes back 30 years but hasn't been serious in terms of build-up until much more recently. The bulk of the 600 or so numbers I have are in folio collections augmented by some originals and a fair number of reprints. I have a want list as I expect others do. There are those with large original collections who could probably supply titles of those which they think should be of interest to other players but which are out of print ..." (EDITOR: Bob, who gently pointed out that our reprint of "Vivacity Rag" has been available for years in David Jasen's folio, has a personal anniversary project: indexing his entire collection plus everything from They All Played Ragtime, using a home computer. If you want to drop him a line, Bob's address is P.O. Box 2073, Banff AB TOL OCO, Alberta, Canada)

Looking back at our 17th...

WHAT A RAGTIME BASH!

By Jack Hutton

The 1981 Ragtime Bash will be remembered as a mini-miracle. It was a miracle that anyone showed up after a year of frustrating communications difficulties, not the least of which was an extended national postal strike. Yet show up they did, and the result was one of the most exciting bashes in years -- not all of which took place during the formal program listed in this issue.

The Friday evening informal get-together gave many the opportunity to hear Peter Lundberg for the first time in person (the bash happily coincided with a Swedish television assignment that brought Peter to Canada). And many others used the evening to show off new tunes or new "wrinkles" that they had mastered in the past year. The evening came to an end with Ross Petot demonstrating why he has to be rated as one of the top James P. Johnson interpreters in or out of captivity.

Saturday night was a different story. It DIDN'T end. Some (including yours truly) drifted off under the mistaken assumption that everyone else was going to bed. John Arpin, who departed immediately after his dinner hour medley to play downtown with his trio, returned at the end of that gig and sat back down at the piano. For most of the night, he and Cy Richards played on the two pianos -- a marathon that a lucky few captured on their tape recorders.

I missed that, but I was fortunate to be there Sunday afternoon when George Foley arrived from Cleveland. Five minutes of his playing revealed why George is now a full-time musician, not missing the men's clothing business for a fleeting second. There were too many others to list here, but Willie Wilson (is there anyone closer to the late Eddy Lang's playing?) played Eccentricity; Ben Conroy and Charles Booty repeatedly excited listeners all weekend long; and Sunday afternoon finished with Peter Lundberg, George Foley, Austin Kitchen and myself playing a 45-minute non-stop round-robin piano duet, switching places every few minutes.

But behind every so-called "miracle" are the unseen organizers, and this year's bash was no exception. Bill McCrostie was the dynamo who remained determined that the bash would take place when others thought of a last-minute cancellation. Then, instead of relaxing after the event, he wrote a note thanking each performer and included a picture of him or her at the piano. He also sent an '81 button to those performers who could not get there. John Fairhead, on top of his other duties, kept a meticulous listing of the formal program -- no small chore when you learn that John Arpin wasn't sure what he'd play in his medley and couldn't recall later just what he did play. (John Fairhead played him back a tape over the phone) And one has to thank John Arpin, Marjory and Mark Wittmann who worry on behalf of the Society for 12 months of the year (or is it 13?). Without those directors, the Ragtime Society would not be entering its 20th anniversary year -- a miracle all by itself.

-FORMAL PROGRAM-

Masters of Ceremonies: MARK WITTMANN and DAVID JASEN

Note: All performances are piano solo unless otherwise designated.

JACK CUFF, RICK LANIEWSKI	Maple Leaf Rag
FRANK WITTMANN	Cleopatra Rag and Creole Belles
GERRY VONDY	Georgia Rainbow and Bohemia Rag
WAYNE ADAMS (Banjo)	Potential Rag and A Bunch of Rags
BOB KIVIAHO	Pastime Rag #3 and Rag Picker's Rag
REIDE KAISER	Cotton Bolls and Jingles
JOHN REID (Guitar)	Manhattan Rag
ROSEMARY RENAUD	Africana and Solace
RICHARD LANIEWSKI	Mark'd Time Rag (Original composition) and Nickel in the Slot

RAINBOW GARDENS ORCHESTRA: WILLIE WILSON (Banjo), JOHN SANNEN, (Baritone Sax), AL BIRD (Trumpet), JACK MacKAY (Sax and Clarinet), GORDON VOGT (Snare Drum and Vocals), JACK HUTTON (Piano) Mississippi Mud, Ain't Misbehavin', My Pet, Thou Swell, and Old Man River

-SHORT INTERMISSION-

A musical POT-POURRI in the PEEL ROOM: Various performers and musical selections

-DINNER INTERMISSION-

JOHN ARPIN	Keeping Out Of Mischief Now
	Squeeze Me
	Ain't Misbehavin'
	Honeysuckle Rose
	Ragtime Nightingale
	Rooster Rag
	Handful Of Keys
	Six Mile Stomp (Original Composition)
	Pick A Card (Original Composition)
	Yesterdays
	Toronto Blues
	Tin Roof Blues
JACK CUFF	Upright and Grand, and Teasin'
CHARLES B. DAVIS JR.	American Beauty Rag
JACK HUTTON	Raymond's Rag (David Jasen composition)
	Caprice Rag (Dick Hyman's recorded version)
GLORIA EKROM (Piano and Vocal)	Medley: The Big Packard and the Little Ford; Oh You Spearmint Kid With Those Wriggley Eyes; It Must Have Been The Irish
AUSTIN KITCHEN	Mississauga Rag (Original Composition)

JEAN and PAUL HULING ("Sister Jean and Laundry Fat"; Piano and Washboard) Pickles and Peppers; Billiken Rag, Grandpa's Spells

Presentation to AMELIA LAMB by MARK WITTMANN.

BEN CONROY	Shout For Joy (Albert Ammons)
	Yancey Special (Meade Lux Lewis)
BEN CONROY and CHARLES BOOTY (Two Pianos)	
	Montana's Lament (Booty-Conroy)
	Boogie Variations (Booty-Conroy)

ROSS PETOT	Eccentricity, Jersey Sweet
DAVE FLOWITT	Waltz In Ragtime, Shreveport Stomp
PETER LUNDBERG	Frankie and Johnny, Original Rags, Sleepy Hollow Rag
DAVID JASEN	3 Over 4 Hits, Fingers Rag (Original Composition)

- END OF FORMAL PROGRAM-

Zella McCrostie, seen here with daughter Ruth Connell and husband Bill, missed some familiar faces at this year's Bash. So she wrote this Open Letter to those absent friends, reminding all that the next Bash will be Oct. 22-23-24. Consider yourself reminded about our Anniversary Bash.

Dear Fellow Ragtimers:

The Bash is over, but the melodies linger on. Isn't it the truth! Not just melodies but indelible memories of an equisite blend of fine music, new and old friends, genial hospitality and just plain fun.

This is an attempt to express an overwhelming grateful feeling by an avid ragtime fan -- not because my better half is a Director -- but because I enjoyed this party so very much.

It was great to see and greet so many special friends from other years as well as new acquaintances. How fortunate we are to have the opportunity of sharing music and good fellowship in the name of ragtime.

Of course, there were a few missing links and to carry the metaphor a bit further, it tends to make the circle incomplete. For whatever reason, I'm sorry you couldn't be there as I looked around in vain for many dear familiar faces.

At the risk of "sticking my neck out" or "my nose in", may I say next Fall is really not too far away to plan for next year's party. My trusty grapevine advises that the 1982 Bash could be a week later than usual, so mark it down now, especially you professional performers. I hope to see you all then.

I would have preferred to write to everyone individually but that would take forever, so with the blessings of our Editor, I have requested space to say this hello and thank you for a mighty fine time.

Yours in Ragtime,

Zella Connell McCrostie

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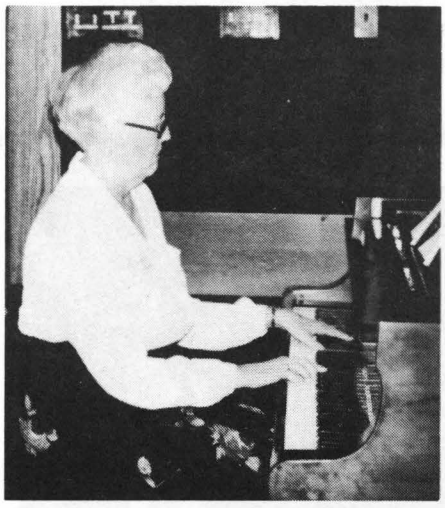


Rosemary Renaud

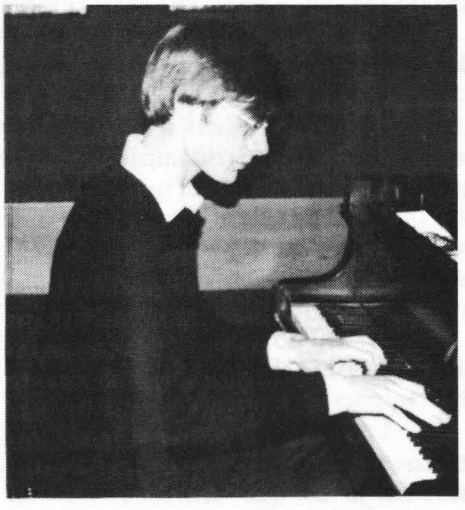
Jack Cuff and Rich Laniewski

Frank Wittmann

Reide Kaiser

Gerry Vondy

Wayne Adams



Ross Petot

Jack Hutton

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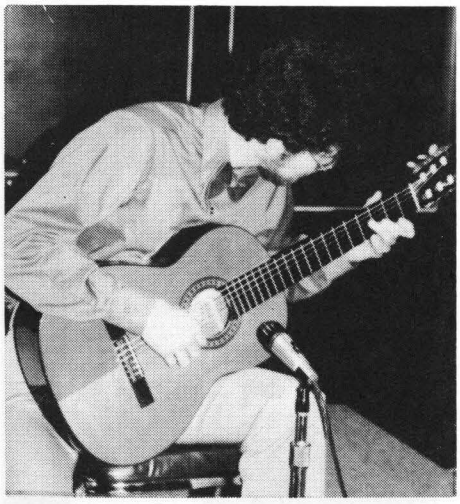
David Jasen

Gloria Ekrom



John Reid

Ben Conroy

Jack Cuff

Dave Flowitt

Jean Huling: Piano Paul Huling: Washboard

BASH 81BASH 81BASH 81BASH

John Arpin

Rainbow Gardens Orchestra: John Sannen, Gordon Vogt, Willie Wilson, Al Bird (hidden) Jack MacKay, Jack Hutton, Rick Giorgi

Bob Kihavo

Peter Lundberg

Austin Kitchen

Amelia Lamb and Mark Wittman

Charles B. Davis Jr.

81BASH 81BASH 81BASH 81BA

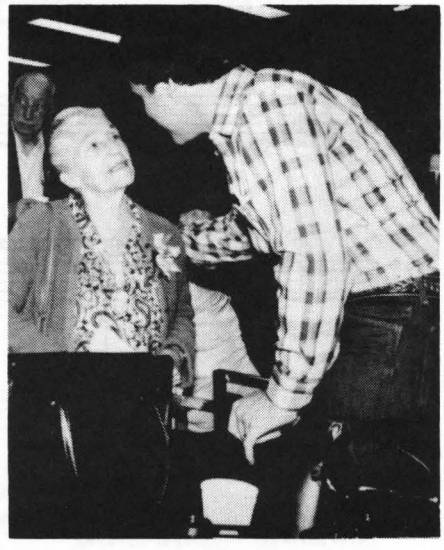
Charles Booty applauded by Peter Lundberg, Ben Conroy and John Fairhead

Mark Wittmann

George Foley

Yolande and John Fairhead, David Jasen

Allen and Idamay MacInnes with Peter Lundberg

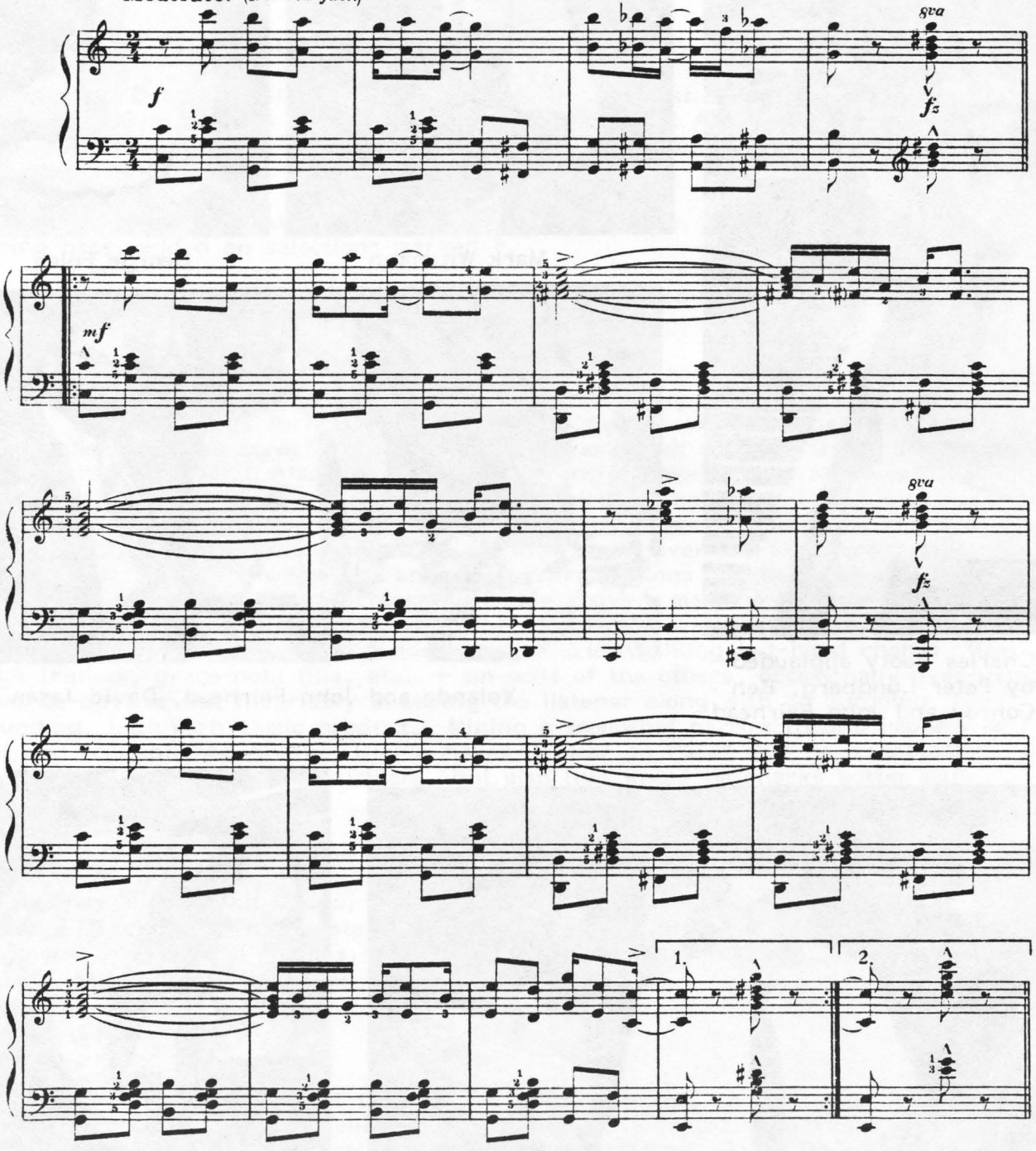


Amelia Lamb, Rich Laniewski

THE PIANIST RAG.

One Step, Two Step or Trot.

FRANK SCHWARZ.
Arr. by Edward R. Winn.

Moderato. (*Not too fast.*)

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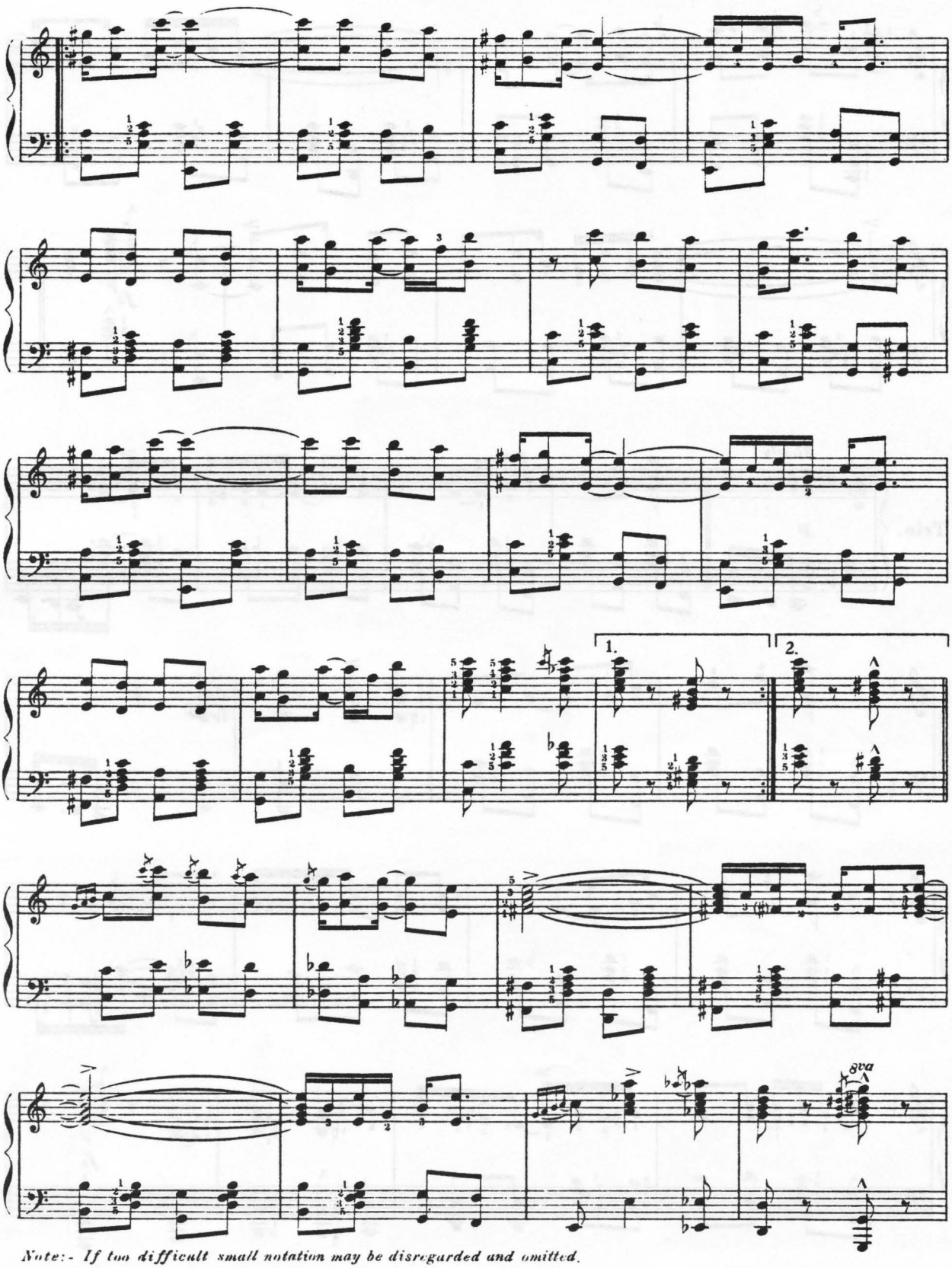
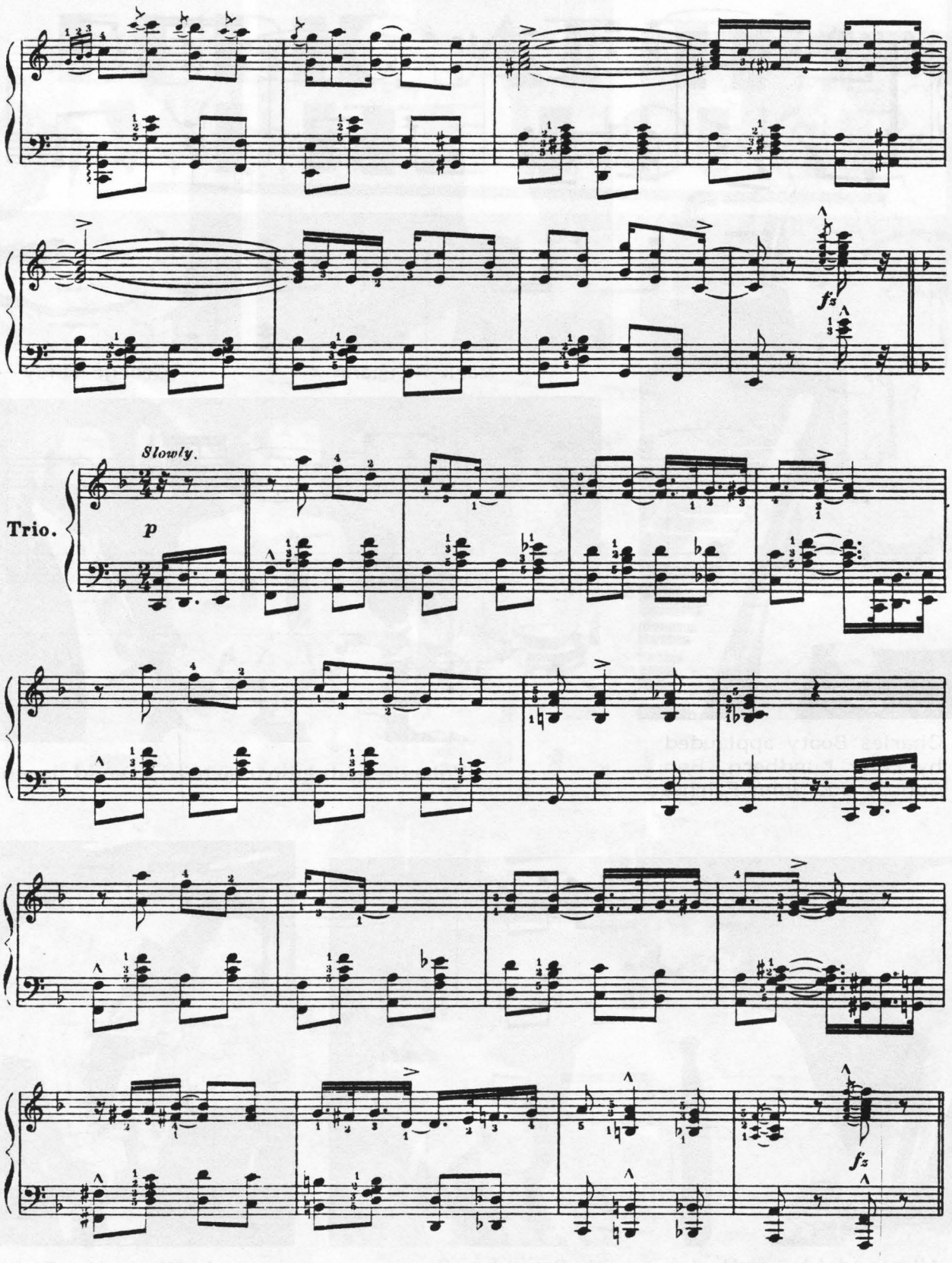

Note:- If too difficult small notation may be disregarded and omitted.

Slowly.
Trio.
p
fz
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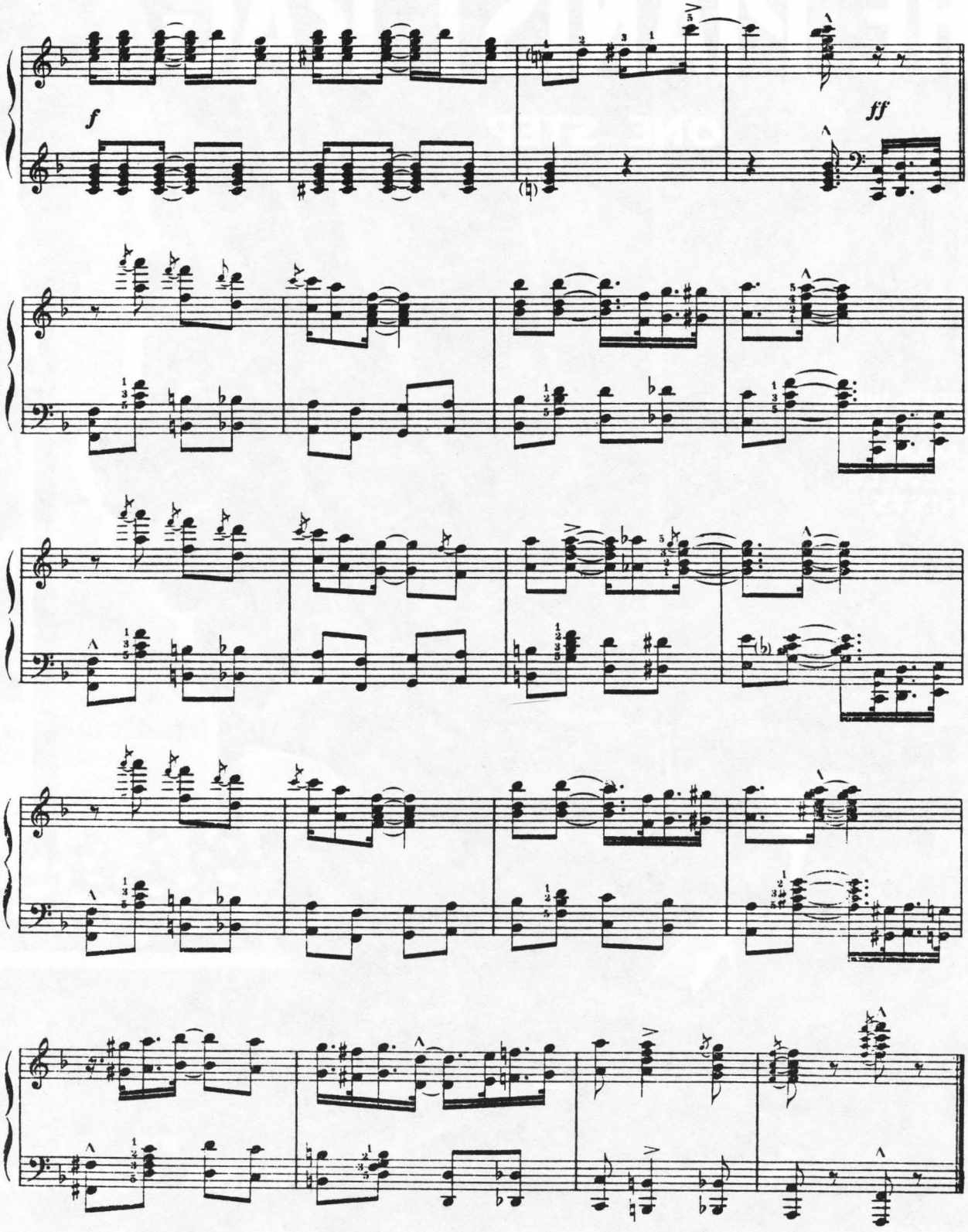
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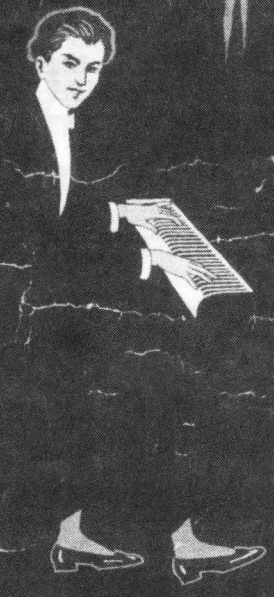
IT'S EASY

THE PIANIST RAG

ONE STEP

FEATURED WITH GREAT SUCCESS BY MANY VAUDEVILLE PIANISTS



BY

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